

Chapter I. The Idea of Revelation.

Definition:- "The continuous and progressive activity whereby God makes Himself known to His rational creatures."

I. The existence of God is assumed.

"There is a trinity of inscrutable mysteries that defy proof, and yet face us with their invincible challenge, viz., God, the soul, and the eternal world." (Day)

"Of these it may be said, 'While it cannot be demonstrated without assumption, it cannot be denied without wrecking all our interests.' " (Bowne, "Theism" p.4)

"Until the objector can prove the existence of "soul" he has no right to deny the existence of God because of our inability to prove it." (paraphrase of Day)

II. A Revelation of God is possible. Implied in the definition.

1. In the nature of man.

The spiritual endowments and aspirations of man well fit him to receive such a revelation.

2. In the nature of God.

God a social and communicative being. Revelations and creation are correlatives.

God so loves us as to invite us to such a filial trust and obedience in Him that there may be realized in us an endless progression in knowledge and character.

III. The Definition points to God as both the Author and Content of Revelation.

God is the Revealer and that which is revealed.

The manifestation of Himself includes all, combined in the unity of a living personality: (see Harris, "The Self-Revelation of God").

"The truth of Revelation is God Himself, in His indissoluble unity; while the truths of rev. are those aspects of the full-orbed reality, which the mind describes and classifies, and makes the basis of its reasoning."

IV. God's Self-Revelation both Continuous and Progressive.

"The universe as a whole, in its order and continuity, is the sublime vehicle of God's self manifestation. God is in season, out of season, declaring His thought, His will, His power, His love. a/ God revealed in nature. (Wordsworth "Nutting"; Evening Voluntaries).

Jesus' view of nature in harmony with this.

b/ God revealed, in higher form, in man.

God speaks in him and to him.

1' In him in his constitutional powers, reason, conscience, will, affections.

2' What man discovers God reveals to him. Rev. and discovery are correlatives. Rev. comes first, God taking the initiative.

"Human personality presupposes divine personality; human reason

2. Notes on Dr. Day.

divine reason; human love divine love; Humanity as a whole reflects the divine character.

This general rev. in and thru man became specialized in Israel, and perfected in Christ.

Chapter II.

THE UNITY OF REVELATION.

I. The sphere of Rev. is the spiritual world.

1. The eternal rev. of the Father and Son, each to the other, in the Holy Spirit.

II. The rev. between God and His finite, image-like, created beings is also a spiritual one. Spirit self-manifesting to spirits.

1. The creation of a world of personal spirits endowed with the capacity to receive a rev.
2. Such a creation necessitated the establishment of the means thru which the Creator may reveal Himself. The physical universe is such a vast means to the end of training God's children. Tho seemingly out of proportion, the soul of man is even vaster than the universe.
 - a/ A system of wonderful adaptations.
 - b/ It is a spiritual system.
 - c/ Man, being himself a mode of God's self-rev., is part of the system of means. Means and end unite in him."The universe is God's supreme effort at self-disclosure."

WILL THE MULTIPLICITY REDUCE TO A SINGLE EASILY FORMULATED PRINCIPLE?

Neither a ready answer can be given nor can we assume that a satisfactory ans. is impossible. Science advances hypotheses to account for known facts not yet understood. Philosophy does not wait for the complete evidence before setting up its systems for the unification of the whole known realm of knowledge and experience.

The ans. must be found either in a finite personality or in the personality of God. The first is impossible because of the fact that it is not the Revealer but the one to whom the rev. is given. We must find it then in the personality of God.

The Xn doctrine of the Trinity is the best working hypothesis in the higher realms of thot.

Read John's prologue and Col. 1:16-17.

John's interpretation of the world in modern terms. The physical universe is an embodiment of the immanent and self-conditioned Logos. He is the principle of its order, the norm of its development, the end of its being. He resides in the primitive element from which the cosmos has been evolved.

3. Notes on Dr. Day.

Evolution is the continuous unfolding of the divine that which He communicates thru nature's symbolism. Evolution is the method but self-expression is the means and love the motive of creation. The eternal Kenosis in which the Logos empties Himself and becomes embodied in matter, that in Him as thus conditioned God might have a suitable theatre for the display of His creative wisdom and power. Without physical nature to give background and support, human history and divine providence and redeeming grace would be alike unthinkable. The immaterial Logos in performing this lowly ministry becomes the servant of all. Herein is love transcendent and divine, that he who was in the form of God should consent to assume the forms of insensate matter, to be blind to the beauty and deaf to the music of his own world, to be the ground for men to walk on, the air for men to breathe, and the spacious firmament with its alternate friendliness and fury, its blazing spheres and brooding calm, its storm-wreck and eclipse and endless mystery, to awaken in men awe and trust, aspiration and humility.

The immensity of the Logos in the creatures inferior to man means an impersonal existence. Reason is there, but it is imposed from above, not spontaneous from within. In humanity the Logos is disengaged from the impersonal creation and rises to a freer and more expansive condition. Man is made in the image of the personal Logos who is the eternal archetype of humanity.

In the incarnation the Logos enters upon a personal divine-human mode of existence.

The incarnation is the climax of God's self-revelation. Intensively it is complete in Christ; extensively it will not be complete until the Spirit of Sonship is reproduced in all men, and they become thereby partakers of the divine nature.

Literature.

Patristic Writings.

Athenagoras, "A Plea for the Xn Church" (A.N. Fathers II, p. 136: chap. X)

Tertulian, "Against Praxes" (A.N.F. III. p. 601f).

Origin, "Against Celsus" (V. chap. 5 end) (VI. chap. 44 end.)

Hippolytus, "The Refutation of all heresies" (X. chaps. 28-30: A.N.F. V)

W.L. Walker

"The Spirit and the Incarnation"

"Xn Theism and a Spiritual Monism"

A.H. Strong

"Christ in Creation"

H. Rashdall

"Philosophy and Religion"

4.
Chapter III. The Method of Revelation.

I. Kenosis. (Phil. 2.5-11)

1. A necessary condition of creation.
2. Divine immanence is the result of the kenotic purpose.
3. The glory of it to X is its voluntariness.
4. A manifestation of God's suffering Love.
By His own act of self-limitation. In nature. In man.
The law of the finite is the law of suffering.
The climax is reached on Calvary.
5. The method by which the true nature of God finds its self-expression.

II. Evolution

III. Realism. The theory that matter has an objective existence apart from mind.

IV. Idealism, or the theory that matter has no existence apart from mind.

The real creation of God is Spirit. The mind alone gives reality to matter. (Fairbairn)

Matter is a necessary symbol of that. The philosophy that denies its existence is false, and the philosophy that regards it as the sum-total of everything to the exclusion of Spirit is equally as false.

Chapter IV. General and Special Revelation.

Chapter V. The Divine Choice of Israel.